

2005 KY Tech Teacher of the Year Candidates Honored During Luncheon in Frankfort

For the past 23 years the Kentucky Vocational-Technical Education Awards and Recognition Program has been held to honor vocational-technical education students, teachers, staff, individuals, organizations and state operated programs. All nominees are associated with state operated programs and schools. The awards



2005 KY Tech Teacher of the Year Candidates

Pictured from left: OCTE Deputy Executive Director Lewis Carter; OCTE Division Director John Marks; Michael Jude, Martin Co. ATC; Debra Gruber, Paducah ATC; Danny Akers, Millard ATC; Pamela King, Knox Co. ATC; James Meade, Belfry ATC; Peggy Williford, Shelby Co. ATC; Thomas Collins, Letcher Co. ATC; David Collins, Mason Co. ATC; Angela Barker, Montgomery Co. ATC; and OCTE Executive Director Emil Jezik.
Not pictured: Jeff Shannon, Floyd Co. ATC; Judy Burns, Harrison Co. ATC;
Alva Evans, Bell Co. ATC; and Donna Lynch, Meade Co. ATC

program began in 1982 with the support and cooperation of regional advisory committees, the Governor's Council on Vocational Education and the State Board of Education. Today, the revered program is sponsored by the Office of Career and Technical Education.

Of the eight categories in the awards program, two require more than a written application. Part of the selection process for the KY Tech Teacher of the Year (TOY) and Beginning Teacher of the Year (Beg. TOY) includes a personal interview. On Tuesday, November 8, thirteen TOY candidates and eight Beg. TOY candidates were



Pictured from left: OCTE Deputy Executive Director Lewis Carter; OCTE Division Director John Marks; Julia Rollins, Corbin ATC; Karen Smith, Shelby Co. ATC; Julia Nosbisch, Bullitt Co. ATC; Jason Calvert, Mason Co. ATC; Corbin H. Melton, Jr., Knox Co. ATC; Marissa Conway, Montgomery Co. ATC; Betty Hunt, Martin Co. ATC; and OCTE Executive Director Emil Jezik. Not pictured: Joe Stinnett Breckinridge Co. ATC.

invited to Frankfort for their personal interview. While in Frankfort, the candidates were guests of honor and treated to a special luncheon hosted by OCTE Executive Director Emil Jezik. All teachers met with colleagues and friends, received special gifts and were thanked for the wonderful job they do each day in the classroom.

“We have so many great instructors in our system and this luncheon is a small way to signify how much we value what you go through every day,” said Jezik. “You have accepted many challenges and made a difference by developing students. It is this type of daily challenge that continues to strengthen the KY TECH system and the students we serve. Please know that we appreciate your efforts and understand the type of dedication that brought you here today.”

Congratulations to each KY Tech Teacher of the Year and KY Tech Beginning Teacher of the Year candidate. We all salute your professionalism, standards of excellence and awareness of the importance technical education plays in the lives of our students. You are making a difference every day. You are appreciated.

Teacher of the Year candidates were interviewed by all five KY Tech area supervisors. Beg. TOY candidates were interviewed by NTI Directors Dr. Ahmed Sabie (r) and Dr. Jack McElroy (l) (far right photo).

Photo at right (L to r):
KY Tech Area
Supervisors Phil
Rudolph, Linda
Floyd, Mary Stratton,
Keith Dickinson, and
Clifford Wells.



Each teacher was given an opportunity to reflect on how they felt about being nominated as a KY Tech Teacher or Beginning Teacher candidate and to convey their thoughts of being a technical education instructor. Here's what each had to say. [\(You can click on the name to e-mail each teacher a personal message of congratulations\).](#)

2005 KY Tech Teacher of the Year Candidates (in alphabetical order)

[Danny Akers - Automotive Technology - Millard ATC](#)

"I appreciate the confidence that my principal and fellow teachers have placed in me for giving me this opportunity to be part of the TOY program. If I could take what I received from this opportunity and cut it into pieces and share them – I would. But, since I can't, it's only appropriate for me to express my gratitude to everyone and encourage others to become part of this program."

[Angela Barker - Office Technology - Montgomery Co. ATC](#)

"I was very honored that my principal would nominate me for this award. I've been teaching for 8 years and he obviously thinks that I'm providing leadership and acting as a positive role model in my school as well as in my community and profession.

I think my role as a teacher in career and technical education is to prepare the students for their next step in life and help them transition into whatever their next step would be –college, technical school, military or the actual workforce. In my classroom, I try to teach the skills that would apply to all four tracks. For example, in my web design class, I have had students that graduated and started their own company to design web sites. They are being successful so that tells me that I am giving them the skills to go out to do something to make money – even at the high school level."

[Judy Burns – Information Technology – Harrison Co. ATC](#)

"At Harrison Co. ATC, all the teachers get together and vote on who will be nominated for this award. To me - win, lose or draw, that's the best compliment – being chosen by my peers.

I believe that my job is to show my students the different paths that are available to them and then give them the confidence to take one of those paths."

David Collins - Electrical Technology - Mason Co. ATC

“Mason Co. ATC is a great place to work and it is an honor for me to have been nominated for the TOY award because in my opinion, my colleagues are all worthy of this recognition.

I am a firm believer in vocational technical education and very much like teaching electrical craft skills to young adults. Being around students who want to learn is both satisfying and rewarding. However, the most important aspect of what we do each day is to work hard to make positive changes in the lives of our students. Hopefully these efforts stay with them throughout their lives and make a real impact in their ability to become successful hard working people capable of making it in the real world of business. While this means becoming skilled and being compensated for mastering a craft, it also means becoming a well-rounded citizen who can make positive contributions in society. It's a great responsibility that we all have in trying to assure these outcomes. A caring and dedicated teacher is always ready for the challenge.”

Tom Collins - Welding - Letcher Co. ATC

“I'm honored to be here with the best of the best. Evidently, I'm doing something right because Barbara Ison wouldn't have taken me away from the classroom to be here for this program.

I've got some good students and I'm proud to say that some of them are employed in their own businesses. I also have one that has designs on becoming a welding engineer. That's what it's all about – helping students to succeed.”

Alva Evans – Auto Body Repair – Bell Co. ATC

“I really appreciate getting nominated for this award. It's great that Barney Judd thought enough of me to nominate me for this award.

I do love teaching and the rewards of knowing that I have made a difference in the lives of so many students. Teaching is the type of profession that provides a new challenge every day and it's my challenge to impart the knowledge that will make my students become skilled.”

Debra Gruber – Information Technology – Paducah ATC

“It was exhilarating and intriguing to be honored with such a class of teachers since I have only been teaching for 4 ½ years.

I enjoy making a difference in the lives of students. Since becoming a teacher at Paducah ATC, I can honestly relay that it’s been my pleasure to upgrade the technology in my classroom and throughout the school. Not only do I love teaching my students, but it’s also rewarding to help my colleagues.”

Michael Jude – Carpentry – Martin Co. ATC

“First of all, I’m grateful and honored to be chosen as one of the TOY candidates. I believe that the KY Tech System is the best in the nation and I’m proud to be a part of something that has a positive impact on the lives of so many students.

I enjoy working with students to train them in the types of skills that will help them become successful in life. The enjoyment of seeing students succeed and go on into the construction field is one of my biggest rewards. I’m an OSHA 500 trainer and believe that safety is one of the most important factors in the construction industry. When my students leave my program, they are safety conscious and carry an OSHA 10 card with them. I believe that if you give me a fish, you feed me for a day. If you teach me to fish, you feed me for life.”

Pamela King – Office Technology – Knox Co. ATC

“It’s an honor to be considered an outstanding teacher and to have an opportunity to be here with a group of outstanding teachers from across the state.

I think career and technical education programs give our students a head start – not only in the career world, but it gives them a boost in their education as well.”

Donna Lynch – Health Sciences – Meade Co. ATC

“Teaching in career and technical education is more than a job – it is a privilege. It is a privilege to have a positive impact on the lives of so many young people. Thank you for the opportunity to be involved in such a wonderful program.”

James Meade – Carpentry – Belfry ATC

“I was overwhelmed when I found out I was nominated for this award.

Not every child is meant to go to college. I feel that technical education fills that gap between high school and a career or college. Every time I can help a kid succeed, I feel that I have accomplished something. When a student comes back to thank me, then I know I have made a difference in the life of that student.”

Jeff Shannon – Information Technology – Floyd Co. ATC

“It’s an honor to be recognized in a program with such a great team of teachers. It’s always beneficial to gather together with colleagues and friends to share experiences and teaching strategies. I would like to take the time to thank Mr. Martin and the Floyd Co. ATC staff for nominating me for this honor. I want to also thank everyone at the central office for the courteous reception during the interview process. I was made to feel quite at home.

What I like most about teaching is that I’m usually able to find an interest in a part of the student’s life to make the learning process smoother. For example, I look at a student’s interests and try to apply those interests into career goals that would work with PC repair or web design.”

Peggy Williford – Health Sciences – Shelby Co. ATC

“What a nice day! I think most of the teachers (myself included) felt a little awkward at being nominated for teacher of the year. I just feel like all the teachers work so hard and I am no more deserving than anyone else. I think we sometimes get so caught up in doing our ‘jobs’ that we forget to celebrate why we do this important work. Yesterday was that celebration for me. We were welcomed warmly by all in Frankfort; given a nice luncheon, many gifts and really treated like royalty. It reinforced for me that I am making a difference in the lives of the students I teach and that I am appreciated for my efforts.

It has been said that teachers touch many lives and I truly believe that. We may also never know that we have touched someone in a special way. I view that as both an honor and a responsibility. How many other professionals in their chosen professions can say that? What an awesome ‘job’ I have!”



Meet the teachers that were unable to be present during the group photo sessions: Tom Stinnett, Breckinridge Co. ATC; Jeff Shannon, Floyd Co. ATC; Judy Burns, Harrison Co. ATC; Alva Evans, Bell Co. ATC; and Donna Lynch, Meade Co. ATC

2005 KY Tech Beginning Teacher of the Year Candidates (in alphabetical order)

Jason Calvert – Collision Repair - Mason Co. ATC

“I think this is just a fantastic day to showcase some of our new teachers. I guess we wouldn’t be here if we weren’t doing a good job.

Technical Education is great for the kids. In our area, it gives students something to look forward to in coming to our school.”

Marissa Conway – Office Technology – Montgomery Co. ATC

“It’s a privilege to be recognized for a career that I have worked hard to achieve the education and qualifications to fulfill this type of profession. I see this as an opportunity to not only represent myself, but to also represent my school, students and community.

I see myself as entrepreneur of my own business. My classroom is the place of business and my students are my customers. I strive to meet the ever changing needs of my customers and to encourage them to succeed in whatever path they choose.”

Betty Hunt – Business & Marketing Technology – Martin Co. ATC

“It’s validating for me to be part of this process – in fact, it’s overwhelming. I just feel so honored to be nominated by my principal and someone who is on top of her game and a former teacher of the year. It’s very satisfying for me to think that Martha Williams saw outstanding qualities in me and felt that I would represent the school and my peers in a professional manner.

In technical education, we have the ability to connect to the students in a positive way and the results are powerful. The students just eat it up. When you are teaching and everyone is getting it full cylinder, it’s awesome and you know you are in the right place. Many times I have walked out of the classroom thinking, I’m right where I need to be.”

Corbin H. Melton, Jr. – Computer Aided Drafting – Knox Co. ATC

“I was very honored to be nominated for the Beg. TOY award. I feel that I am blessed to have been given the opportunity to pass on my vocation to young people who may use that knowledge and enter our workforce here in Kentucky.

Julia Nosbisch – Health Sciences – Bullitt Co. ATC

“I’m always telling my students ‘its only work if you want to be somewhere else.’ It’s great to share my passion with my own community because I was born and raised in Bullitt Co.”

Julia Rollins – Health Sciences – Corbin ATC

“Of course, this is a huge honor for someone to think enough of what you have done in order to nominate you. It’s a bit overwhelming – especially since this is my second year of teaching. I think this opportunity is really neat.

I love teaching – we have a good time. I expect a lot of the kids and want more from the kids than they are capable of doing. I love to see the light go on in all kids, but more importantly those who struggle. I’m for the underdog – I struggled a lot through life. I have several teachers that I look back upon who helped me to see the light so it’s really cool to be on this side because I know I’m doing what I need to do in order to help out those in need.”

Karen Smith – Health Sciences – Shelby Co. ATC

“I’m humbled and honored to be here. It is a joy to be a part of the initial education process for our students. Looking around our community, we are so blessed to have the products of our program being successful healthcare providers. The future of healthcare walks into my classroom everyday.”

Joe Stinnett - Carpentry – Breckinridge Co. ATC

“I feel privileged to be here and to be nominated. Ten years ago, I was responsible for building the CNC addition to Breckinridge Co. ATC. At that time, I decided I wanted to become a teacher. I worked for a contractor who required a lot of traveling. When a job opened at the middle school in Feb. 1996, I applied for and was fortunate to get hired. I really wanted the carpentry job at the ATC and waited for it to open. I wanted to become a teacher to pass along some of my knowledge on to the younger generation.

Congratulations to all of our nominees and Good Luck.

**The Twenty-Third Annual Awards and Recognition
Program will be held at the Lincoln Co. ATC
Thursday, December 8, 2005
We look forward to seeing you there.**



**Good News Flash #139
November 10, 2005**

